

PLANNING BOARD STAFF REPORT

DATE: March 28, 2011

TO: HONORABLE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE
PLANNING BOARD

FROM: Andrew Thomas
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SUBJECT: Alameda Landing Update

BACKGROUND

In 2006, 2007, and 2008, the Planning Board and City Council approved a series of agreements and entitlements with Prologis/Catellus for a 77 acre site generally referred to as "Alameda Landing". The entitlements and agreements included a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR), a General Plan Amendment, a Rezoning, a Master Plan Amendment, a Development Agreement Amendment, a Disposition and Development Agreement, and a Design Review approval for the first phase of the project.

In total, the package of entitlements and agreements allow for up to 300,000 square feet of retail use, 300 residential units, and 400,000 square feet of office space on the 77 acre site. The 2008 Design Review approval for the first phase of the project included a 250,000 square foot retail center located between Stargell Avenue and a future extension of Mitchell Avenue.

Shortly after the final action by the Planning Board to approve the design review application, economic conditions changed, and Catellus was unable to secure adequate tenant commitments to pursue the project. However, the City of Alameda and Catellus were able to complete the Stargell Extension project in 2010, which provides the primary gateway into the future project.

ANALYSIS

Early in 2011, Catellus approached the City to initiate discussions regarding possible adjustments to the package of entitlements to facilitate redevelopment of the property and improve the project. Catellus is currently pursuing an agreement with Target stores to bring Target to Alameda. To be successful,

Alameda Landing Mixed-Use Center Overview

The Alameda Landing Mixed-Use Center is divided into four land use sub-areas, as identified in the Mixed-Use Center Sub-Area map:

Sub-Area 1—Waterfront Commercial Center—Office: Sub-Area 1 consists of approximately 20 acres north of Mitchell Avenue fronting the Waterfront Promenade to the west of (but not adjacent to) Fifth Street. Sub-Area 1 includes approximately 2,000 linear feet of frontage on the Oakland Alameda Estuary and is approximately 1,000 feet distance from Schnitzer Steel and the Port of Oakland shipping terminals.

Sub-Area 2—Waterfront Commercial Center—Retail: Sub-Area 2 consists of approximately 7 acres north of Mitchell Avenue fronting the Waterfront Promenade on both sides of Fifth Street. The sub-area is immediately west of existing waterfront marinas, restaurants, and a senior care facility.

Sub-Area 3—Commercial Center: Sub-Area 3 consists of approximately 23.5 acres south of Mitchell Avenue and east of Fifth Street.

Sub-Area 4a/b—Residential Areas: Sub-Area 4a is located west of Fifth Street and south of Mitchell Avenue and Sub-Area 4b is located east of the Waterfront Commercial Center and north of Mitchell Avenue. Sub-Area 4a is approximately 17.5 acres and is located immediately east of Coast Guard residential neighborhood and immediately north of the Bayport residential neighborhood. Sub-Area 4b is approximately four acres and is located immediately west of the existing senior care facility and Marina Square.



Mixed-Use Center Sub-Areas

- ① Waterfront Commercial - Office
- ② Waterfront Commercial - Retail
- ③ Commercial
- ④ Residential

Catellus believes that certain changes to the previous agreements and approvals may be necessary. Any changes to the previous entitlements and approvals would need to be reviewed and approved by the Planning Board and the City Council. To accommodate Target's schedule, Catellus has informed the City that the review and final actions by the Planning Board and City Council would need to be completed by the end of this calendar year.

Although Catellus has not submitted an application to modify any of the former entitlements yet, staff requested that Catellus give the Planning Board and the West Alameda community an opportunity to review and comment on the current entitlements and plans in preparation for future community discussions about potential amendments.

From staff's perspective, if Catellus (the City's development partner) is going to suggest certain changes to the past plans to improve the project from Catellus's perspective, then the City of Alameda and the West Alameda community should also highlight any issues or ideas that the City might wish to raise for future consideration in the amendment discussions.

A copy of some of the key drawings from the previous plans are included in this report. Electronic copies of all the past entitlements and agreements are available to the public upon request.

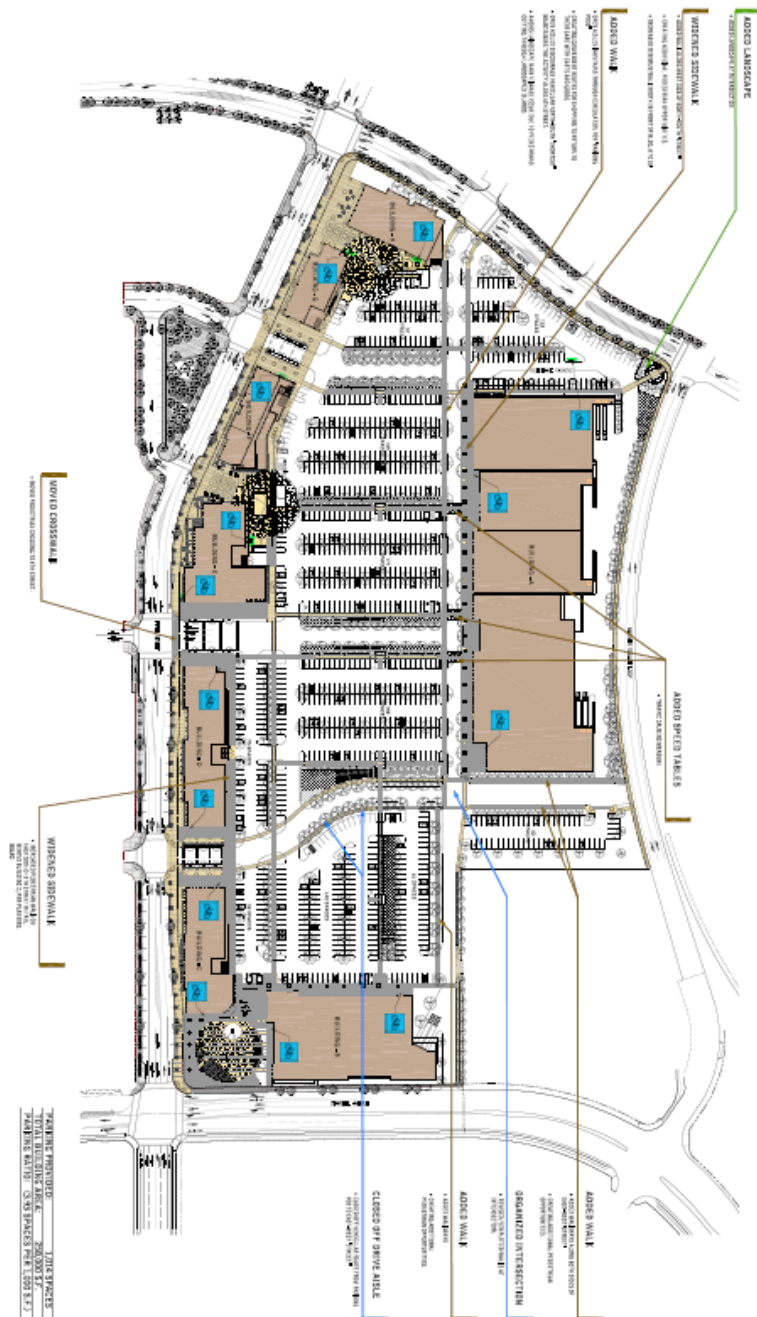
Issues for Possible Discussion:

Based upon the extensive public hearings and meetings that occurred in 2006, 2007 , and 2008, some issues that the community might want to revisit include the following:

1. Retail Center Parking Lot Design and Building Placement. In 2008, after a long series of public hearings, the Planning Board, and then the City Council on appeal, approved a final “compromise plan” for the first retail phase of the project.

Catellus is now revisiting this plan with Target in mind. Although a plan was finally approved (which may now need to be revisited), the plan caused concerns for many because of the very large parking field, the difficulties that the field created for pedestrians trying to cross the parking area, and the location of buildings around the perimeter of the area.

Given that Catellus will likely request revisions to this previously approved plan, the community may wish to take this opportunity to identify whether those previous concerns are still valid and should be rectified or addressed in a revised plan.



2. Residential Commercial Interface: As shown in the Master Plan diagram at the top of this report, the Master Plan envisioned a residential area across 5th Street from the retail center. In the previous planning meetings, the staff, Catellus, and the Planning Board were concerned about the interface between the retail areas on the east side of the new 5th Street and the residential areas on the west of 5th Street. All agreed that 5th Street represented a major opportunity to create a special new street leading to the waterfront, but many wondered how a neighborhood of single family homes facing a major new regional shopping center would work. The drawing below from the Master Plan shows a series of “Townhome” style single family and duplex units (on the left of the illustration) facing the retail center (on the right). At the time, the City had not adopted a Density Bonus Ordinance which provides some flexibility for a diversity of building types. Catellus has asked staff whether that ordinance could or should be used to allow for opportunities for townhomes, row houses or other more urban housing types on 5th Street to create a better interface with the retail uses across the street. The community and the Planning Board may wish to comment on those ideas at this time.



Illustrative rendering of Entry Plaza at Tinker Avenue and Fifth Street

Illustrative as to number of buildings, building location, orientation and massing, location of parks, and configuration of public facilities.

3. The Waterfront. As shown in the drawing below and the land use diagram at the top of the report, the waterfront portions of the Alameda Landing provide an unique and wonderful opportunity to create a new public gathering place on the water for the Alameda community. As shown in the land use diagram above, the Master Plan envisions a waterfront retail and restaurant area at the foot of 5th

Street and a large waterfront office park allowing for up to 400,000 square feet of office space. This opportunity, however, faces many challenges, including:

1. Catellus has discovered that the existing wharf that extends out over the water along this entire frontage is not structurally sound. Retrofitting the wharf in its entirety does not appear to be financially feasible, so a redesign of the wharf and planned public open space areas will probably be needed.



Illustrative rendering of Waterfront Promenade along adaptively reused Warehouse
Illustrative as to location and alignment of bike lane, location of parks, and configuration of public facilities.

2. The office market is currently extremely weak. It is very hard to predict when the office market will recover to the point where demand will support construction of new office buildings and the adjacent public waterfront areas. At the prior meetings, there were at least a couple of Planning Board members who questioned the decision to retain this area for office use. Former Board member Cook advocated for a greater mix of uses in this area to support “24-hour” use and “eyes” on the park, so that the public waterfront would always feel safe and not become uninhabited on weekends and after hours. The community and the Board may want to revisit these ideas and concepts with Catellus.



Illustrative rendering of Waterfront Plaza with Water Shuttle Landing

Illustrative as to number of buildings, building location, orientation and massing, configuration of waterfront plaza and waterfront promenade, location and design of water shuttle facilities, location of parks, and configuration of public facilities.

Conclusions: This report is intended to simply remind the Planning Board and the community about some of the many issues that were discussed between 2005 and 2008 when the City and the community worked extensively with Catellus on the Alameda Landing plan. As these discussions are restarted and as Catellus brings forward their ideas and suggestions to improve the plans, staff would like the community and the Planning Board to be prepared to participate in the amendment discussions with their own ideas about what might be done to better realize and facilitate implementation of a community vision for Alameda Landing.

At this time, no action is required by the Planning Board, but any thoughts, comments, or ideas about any of the issues raised above or observations about the site would be much appreciated by both City staff and the City's development partner, Catellus.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

Andrew Thomas
PLANNING SERVICES MANAGER